

REMARKS

All the currently amended claims have been changed to overcome the Examiner's objections. The amended claims have been altered to provide proper antecedent basis, i.e. changing definite articles to indefinite articles. Additionally, many of the claims have been edited to resolve issues of indefiniteness under 35 U.S.C. 112, cited by the Examiner. The Applicant notes that all changes to the claim language, phrasing and grammar are supported by the initial disclosure and do not constitute new matter.

Turning to the substantive matter raised, the Examiner rejected Claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being unpatentable over Verzilli et al., U.S. Patent No. 4,759,102 herein '102. Specifically, it is the Examiner's position that Applicant's recitation of guide wheels and cogged belts, which are equipped with one or more scraping or cleaning elements is anticipated by the cited reference.

Applicant respectfully disagrees.

It is Applicant's position that the Verzilli reference discloses a flat cleaning device, the present invention is both directed at a different function and employs a different structure to obtain that use. The present invention seeks to clean the guide that the flats travel on. More specifically, the flats have guide pins that travel along the guide. These pins as well as the guide itself are subject to wear by impurities located in the fibers that are being processed by the flats. Indeed, newer models of card machines have a coating on the guides that aids in sliding the pins and attempts to minimize the abrasive damage done by impurities. However, these coatings can be damaged by sand and dirt, when they are compressed on the guide by the action of the guide pins sliding over them. Additionally, fatty substances and oils present on the raw material can begin to coat the guide and guide pins causing further damage. These materials are not easy removed since

the compressive action of the guide pins spreads these substances on the guide pins as well as the guide. The present invention is directed at removing these impurities so as not to damage the guide or the guide pins. The present invention accomplishes this goal by using scraping devices that remove the impurities from the guide itself, thereby preventing it from coating the guide pins. Furthermore the present invention teaches a device that does not require an expansion in the size of the guide track, or additional apparatus. In contrast, the cited reference requires a large additional mechanism for scrubbing the flats as well as depositing the waste material. See '102 patent, Fig 1.

In contrast to the present invention, the cited reference does not disclose the cleaning of the guide. The cited reference teaches a device that cleans the flats themselves. It discloses clothing designed to clean the points, hooks and saw teeth located on the flats. More importantly, the prior art and the present invention use different structures to clean different parts of a carding machine mechanism. The present invention requires the use of scraping elements to come into contact with the guide, while the prior art requires the use of a rotating brush to come into contact with the clothing of the flats. The present invention could not preform the function of the prior art, since the structure of the flats is such that it could not be cleaned by cog driven scrapers. Additionally, the prior art is directed at moving flats and rotating brushes, while the present invention is directed at the moving scrapers over a stationary guide.

Conclusion

Based on the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that the present claimed invention is not rendered anticipated under §102(b). Removal of the rejections are therefore requested.

An early and favorable action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully Submitted.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'JVC', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

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